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PHOTO SERIES NO. 13

SUPPLYING A METROPOLITAN AREA WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

SEPTEMBER 1958

It takes a lot of fruits and vegetables, more than 70,000 carloads a year, to feed the five million or so people in Chicago's metropolitan area. About one-third of the produce unloaded at Chicago arrives by truck; for the nation as a whole, truck shipments amount to about 40 percent of the total. Chicago, like several other cities in mid-America, is an important re-routing point, and many of the carlots of fruits and vegetables merely pause for ice and are sent to cities farther east. Pictures were taken for USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.



N-25697--This is where Chicago's potatoes and onions are bought and sold in carload lots. Most of the people in this open air market, in the heart of a railroad yard, are dealers. They have bought potatoes or onions from growers or shippers in distant areas and will sell them in Chicago or in markets farther east. The shed contains telephone booths, where most of the calls are long distance to growing areas or to Eastern markets.



N-25707--A Government inspector checks the temperature of a load of potatoes after arrival at Chicago. The potatoes were bought sight unseen and the purchaser has requested an official inspection to be sure they measure up to standards of U. S. No. 1 potatoes.



N-25710--From several points in the car, the inspector weighs a sample of potatoes and then determines what percentage of the sample has defects. Too many defects put the potatoes into a lower grade.



N-25705--Many cars of fresh fruits and vegetables stop in Chicago only long enough to be re-iced, and then are sent on to eastern markets. Pulverized ice is being blown into this car of carrots.

Magazines and newspapers may obtain glossy prints of any of these photographs from the Photography Division, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. Others may purchase prints (8 x 10) at \$1.00 each from the same address.



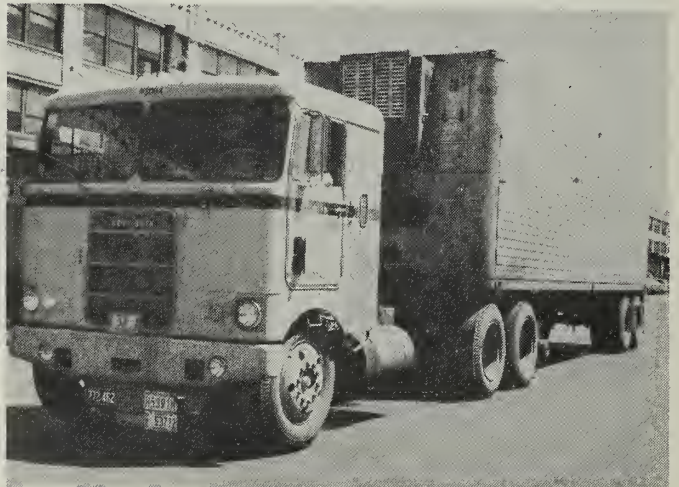
N-25701--This icing crew, working on top of a string of refrigerator cars, drops 300-pound blocks of ice into bunkers inside the car and is breaking them into smaller pieces. The white material is rock salt which will be dumped on the ice to speed melting and lower the temperature inside the car.



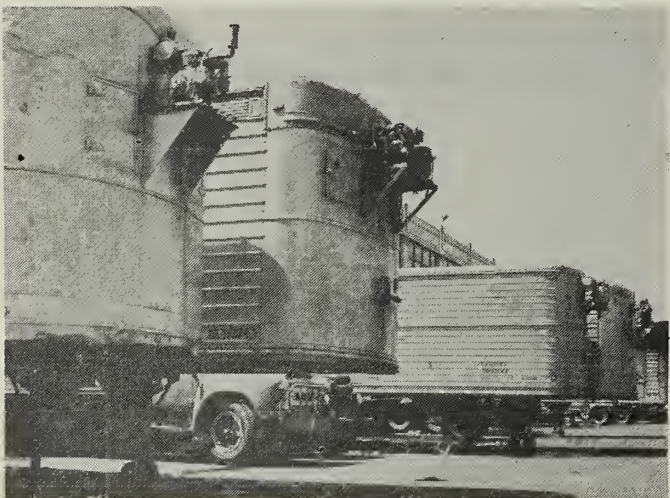
N-25706--These men are making their own inspection of a car of head lettuce bought by their firm. If they think the lettuce is below the grade promised, they may ask for Government inspection, for which the firm pays.



N-25712--This is a view down one street of Chicago's South Water Market, which is the principal wholesale and jobbing market for fruits and vegetables. Some of the produce is moved here from the railroad tracks; produce arriving by truck comes directly to stores of firms which sell to other dealers, to chain or independent retailers.



N-25717--This is a 1958 truck tractor and refrigerated trailer which brought a load of mixed vegetables and melons from Florida to Chicago. The trailer is 37 feet long.



N-25726--These trailers, all of them at least 33 feet long, have hauled loads of fresh vegetables, fruits and melons from Southern growing areas to Chicago. The tractors have unhitched and have driven away to a parking lot to help reduce congestion in the South Water Market, which was built in 1925 when trucks were much smaller.



N-25734--An independent retail store owner buys a supply of vegetables from a wholesaler on the South Water Market. He holds two boxes of mushrooms in his hand.



N-25727--This dealer in Chicago's South Water Market handles only fruit. Some of it is bought by the owner or one of his four sons right in the growing area; some of it is ordered by long distance phone on the basis of Government grades, and some from the Chicago Fruit Auction.



N-25735--Plastic baskets of strawberries are carried in modern lightweight, well ventilated boxes with good product visibility and high consumer appeal.



N-25736--These Jonathan apples were grown in Michigan, where many growers are putting up a four-pound pack, shipping the film bags in heavy cardboard cartons. Ordinarily, Jonathan do not keep well much after Christmas, but these were in good condition in May, because they were stored in an atmosphere high in carbon dioxide.



N-25731--Bananas require special treatment, and usually are handled by wholesalers specializing in this one fruit. They were picked green, and have been kept below 40 degrees all the way from Central America. In this ripening room the temperature is 70 degrees. Over a period of four days, the temperature will be reduced gradually to 58 degrees.



N-25729-- After four days of ripening, bananas are removed in "hands" and packed in boxes for delivery to retail stores.



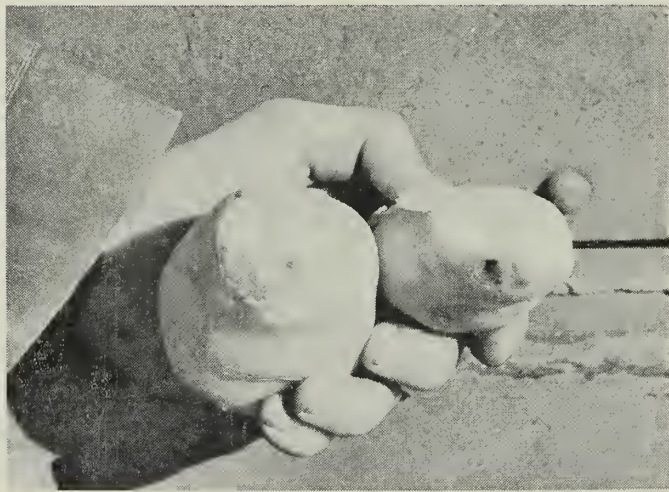
N-25723--This truck is typical of the newer types used by fruit and vegetable wholesalers and jobbers to deliver produce to retail outlets in Chicago.



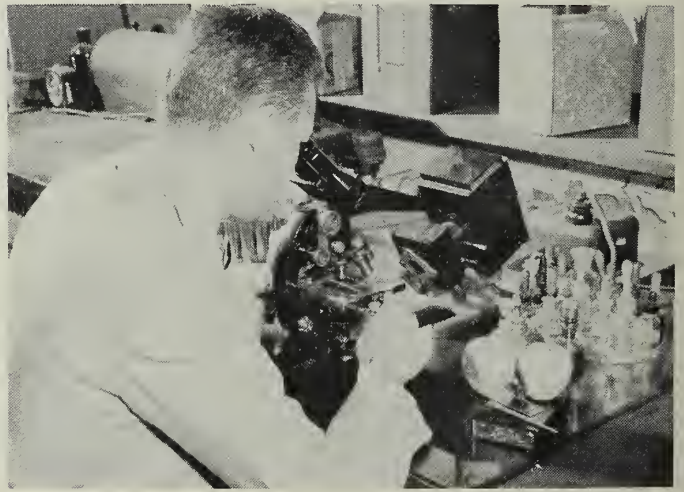
N-25721--Horses have not completely disappeared from the scene in large cities. Dobbin pulls a huckster cart, making the rounds from home to home on Chicago's West Side.



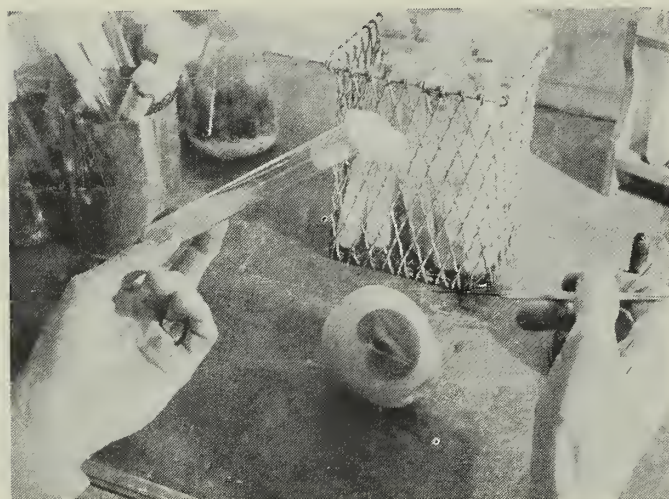
N-25709--Not all the millions of individual fruits and vegetables sent to market are perfect. Here, a Government inspector has found a potato that is blemished on the outside, and cuts it open to see how deeply the trouble has penetrated.



N-25699--"Blight" is a term commonly used to describe many different diseases. In this instance, the ailment has spread through the skin and into the flesh of these Long White potatoes. Was the trouble caused by growing conditions? Infection? Improper temperature in the rail car?



N-25748--Disease sleuth at work. William Wright, one of USDA's plant pathologists in the U. S. Department of Agriculture's fruit and vegetable disease laboratory, uses a microscope to help identify the cause of rot in these Golden Delicious apples.



N-25747--One method of identifying a disease in an apple, potato or some other crop is to put some of the diseased tissue in a test tube containing a gelatin-like material called agar agar, and study the kind of growth that takes place.



N-25749--Another method of tracking down and identifying a disease is to see if it will attack other kinds of plants. The asparagus is known to be infected with phytophthora. Potato slices and apples have been inoculated to learn if they are susceptible to the same disease.